

City of Las Vegas

AGENDA MEMO

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING DATE: MAY 14, 2008

DEPARTMENT: PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

ITEM DESCRIPTION: TXT-34044 - APPLICANT/OWNER: CITY OF LAS VEGAS

**** CONDITIONS ****

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: APPROVAL

1. Title 19.18.050 is hereby amended as follows:

(G) Major Review of Site Development Plans.

(1) Major Review. A Major Review of a Site Development Plan is required if:

- (a) The Planning Commission or City Council, through prior action, has determined that the proposed project or improvement shall be processed as a Major Review;
- (b) The proposed development contains a building which is four stories or greater in height; or
- (c) The Director determines that the proposed development could significantly impact the land uses on the site or on surrounding properties.

(2) Major Review Process.

- (a) Application. An application for a Major Development Review shall be filed in the Department of Planning and Development. The application shall be signed and notarized by the owner of the property where the development is to occur or by the owner's authorized agent. A Site Development Plan requiring a Major Review may not be approved as part of a Building Permit Application.

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(b) Drawings and Plans Required.

- (i) Plans describing the proposed development of the property shall be submitted as required by the Director. Complete working drawings are not necessary; however, proposed structures (including building elevations), streets, driveways and access points, sight visibility restriction zones (as described in LVMC 18.12.210), on-site circulation and parking, walls, landscaping, building materials, dumpster locations and other improvements must be shown. Preliminary drawings must contain sufficient information to permit the determination of compliance with good planning practices, applicable standards and ordinances. Floor plans are not normally required.
- (ii) For any proposed site development plan which would be expected to generate over 100 peak hour vehicle trips, a Traffic Impact Analysis shall be submitted. The estimated peak hour vehicle trips should be made in accord with the most recent editions of Trip Generation and Trip Generation Handbook, as published by the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE).
- (iii) For any development site where twenty percent or more of the aggregate site has a slope of natural grade above four percent, a cross section must be submitted. Each cross section must extend a minimum of one hundred feet beyond the limits of the project at each property line, showing the location and finish floor elevations of adjacent structures; the maximum grade differentials; and the elevations of existing and proposed conditions.

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**** STAFF REPORT ****

APPLICATION REQUEST

This is a request to amend the submittal requirements for a Site Development Plan Review to implement an Action under Recommendation 1 of the recently adopted Transportation & Streets and Highways Element of the Las Vegas 2020 Master Plan related to the submittal of a Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) for developments that are anticipated to generate more than 100 peak hour vehicle trips.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

<i>Related Relevant City Actions by P&D, Fire, Bldg., etc.</i>	
04/15/09	The City Council adopted Ordinance 6038, which was introduced as Bill No. 2009-13, to adopt the Transportation & Streets and Highways Element of the Las Vegas 2020 Master Plan. The Planning Commission and staff recommended approval.

Pursuant to Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) Sections 278.150 through 278.160 there are certain components (or elements) required as part of a jurisdiction's master plan. Since the adoption of requirements for a master plan in 1941, a Transportation Plan and a Streets and Highways Plan have been required components. A circulation plan was included as a part of the city's 1992 General Plan; however, legislation adopted in 2001 placed a more stringent requirement on communities of 400,000 or more people that the circulation plan did not meet. The current master plan, Las Vegas 2020 Master Plan, was adopted in September 2000, with the expectation that a series of elements specific to the NRS requirements would follow at intervals thereafter.

Pursuant to Title 19.06.050, a traffic impact analysis is one of several components of a master development plan which is required for a rezoning to the city's PD (Planned Development) District. Title 19 defines a Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) as a study that provides information on the projected traffic likely to be generated by a proposed development and assesses its impact on the roadways in the immediate proximity of a proposed development. The TIA should identify any potential traffic operational problems or concerns and recommend appropriate actions to address such problems or concerns.

ANALYSIS

Understanding the demands placed on the community's transportation network by development is an important dimension of assessing the overall impacts of development. The 1992 Circulation Plan attempted to address these impacts from new development on transportation patterns and the

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circulation system by recommending that the zoning ordinance be amended to require a traffic impact analysis early in the development review process. The Plan called for all development projects that generate more than 100 vehicle trips during peak hours to submit a TIA. The zoning ordinance was never amended to include this requirement.

All development generates traffic, and it may generate enough traffic to necessitate additional investment of capital dollars into the transportation network. This additional spending could be for right-of-way acquisition, new roads/turn lanes/traffic signals or accelerated maintenance of overburdened, existing infrastructure facilities. Further, as roadways become congested, motorists will use other routes that are not necessarily intended for through traffic, resulting in increased accidents, maintenance, and air pollution. The financial, environmental and social impacts of traffic congestion have made traffic impact analyses more common as a planning tool to anticipate the added burden of new development on the transportation network and to mitigate negative impacts. Understanding traffic impacts becomes even more important as budgets for public facility and infrastructure improvements become increasingly strained.

Currently, the Public Works Department regularly places a condition of approval on developments that are anticipated to generate more than 100 vehicle trips during peak hours to require a TIA. The condition requires approval of the TIA prior to the issuance of any building or grading permits, submittal of any construction drawings or the recordation of a map subdividing a site. Compliance with the recommendations of the TIA must occur prior to occupancy of a structure. Due to the timing of the TIA submittal, usually well after the entitlement approval, a number of factors addressed by the analysis and the subsequent recommendations may necessitate significant changes to the approved Site Development Plan Review and that can drastically change the nature of a development, extend timelines and increase costs to the developer and the community.

The Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) suggests that a comprehensive traffic analysis be completed whenever a development is expected to generate 100 or more new inbound or outbound trips during the peak hours. The ITE *Trip Generation Manual* is based on hundreds of trip generation surveys nationwide for a range of land use types. It is the most commonly accepted data source for trip generation rates. Generally, examining those numbers based on the peak-hour conditions are used in traffic assessments. An analysis of peak-hour conditions results in a more accurate identification of site traffic impacts.

To put the 100-plus peak hour vehicle trips threshold into perspective, it would be anticipated that a single family subdivision of 150 homes, multi-family apartment building of 220 units, an office complex of 55,000 square feet of gross floor area, or a retail center of 15,500 square feet would generate this level of traffic and therefore should have a TIA. The table at the end of this section from the “Community Guide to Development Impact Analysis” by Mary Edwards provides more examples of the scope of development that would be anticipated to meet the 100-plus peak hour vehicle trips threshold and therefore be required to submit a TIA at the time of application submittal for a Site Development Plan Review.

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Even if the anticipated development does not generate the 100-plus peak hour vehicle trip threshold level established, a TIA may still be necessary, and conditioned as a part of an approval. Examples where this may still be needed are in cases where there is:

- High traffic volume on surrounding roads that may affect movement to and from the proposed development.
- Inadequate sight distance at access points.
- A development that includes a drive-through operation.

The proposed amendment to include provisions for the submittal of a TIA at the time an application is made for a Site Development Plan Review for projects anticipated to generate 100-plus peak hour vehicle trips is in keeping with the Actions listed under Recommendation 1 of the Transportation & Streets and Highways Element of the Las Vegas 2020 Master Plan. Additionally, the proposed amendment is in keeping with the general practice espoused by the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) and will allow for better decision making at the time of development entitlements by ensuring that impacts related to traffic are addressed earlier in the process.

Example Threshold Levels¹:

Land Use	100 Peak Hour Trips
Residential: Single Family	150 units
Apartments	245 units
Condos/Townhouses	295 units
Mobile Home Park	305 units
Shopping Center	15,500 sq. ft.
Fast Food Restaurant (GFA)	5,200 sq. ft.
Convenience Store w/ gas (GFA)	1,300 sq. ft. or 5 pumps
Bank w/ Drive-In	4,400 sq. ft.
Hotel/Motel	250 rooms
General Office	55,000 sq. ft.
Medical/Dental Office	37,000 sq. ft.
Research & Development	85,000 sq. ft or 4.5 acres
Light Industrial	115,000 sq. ft. or 8 acres
Manufacturing	250,000 sq. ft.

¹ Edwards, M (YYYY). *Community Guide to Development Impact Analysis*. Retrieved April 28, 2009, from Land Information and Computer Graphics Facility.
 Web site: http://www.lic.wisc.edu/shapingdane/facilitation/all_resources/impacts/analysis_traffic.htm

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FINDINGS

The proposed text amendment will accomplish the following:

- Implement one of the Action items under Recommendation 1 of the Transportation & Streets and Highways Element of the Las Vegas 2020 Master Plan.
- Require that any proposed development that is anticipated to generate 100-plus peak hour vehicle trips submit a TIA at the time an application is submitted for the Site Development Plan Review.
- Reduce the costs to the developer and to the community associated with the potentially significant changes to an approved Site Development Plan Review due to the post-approval timing of the TIA submittal by conducting the analysis and addressing the subsequent recommendations prior to the entitlements approval process, thereby allowing a more informed decision making practice and preventing extend timelines and re-submittal of applications among other potentially costly repercussions.

The following table summarizes all proposed changes:

Code Requirements	Existing Regulations	Proposed Regulations
Title 19.18.050 (G) – Site Development Plans: Major Review of Site Development Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No provision is made for the submittal of a Traffic Impact Analysis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For proposed developments that are anticipated to generate 100-plus peak hour vehicle trips a Traffic Impact Analysis is required at the time of submittal of the Site Development Plan Review application.

NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS NOTIFIED

ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

SENATE DISTRICT

NOTICES MAILED

NEWSPAPER ONLY

APPROVALS

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PROTESTS

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